

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 052622
ORIGIN SY-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-10 ARA-10 MCT-01 HA-05 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 /042 R

DRAFTED BY: SY/CC/TAG IJOHNSTONE: BME
APPROVED BY: SY/CC JOHN F PEERDEW
EA/ANP EHURWITZ (SUBS)
SY/OPS/FO/EA WJHOLDA (DRAFT)
ARA/AND: V WCSERGEANT (SUBS)
SY/OPS/FO/ARA-PAMORTON (DRAFT)
DESIRED DIST: SY/OPS/FO PAMORTON, WJHOLDA
-----101936 031200Z /10/42

R 012103Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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HONG KONG FOR RSS, CANBERRA AND CARACAS FOR RSO, FROM SY/CC

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (LINE 3, PARA 3 OMITTED)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:ASEC, PINS

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF THREAT SITUATION IN CARACAS FOR
AUSTRALIAN DFA SECURITY

1. RURAL INSURGENCY IN VENEZUELA HAS BEEN ON THE INCREASE
OVER THE LAST YEAR, ESPECIALLY IN THE EASTERN STATE OF
ANZOATEGUI. RANCHES HAVE BEEN RAIDED, A BUS STOPPED, AND
SEVERAL SMALL TOWNS BRIEFLY "OCCUPIED" BY LEFTIST INSUR-
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GENTS WHO HARANGUED THE POPULATION ON THEIR REVOLUTIONARY
IDEOLOGY.

2. THE RURAL ATTACKS HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BY INDIVIDUALS
CLAIMING MEMBERSHIP IN THE BANDERA ROJA (BR) GROUP OR
THE BR SPLINTER GROUP, THE BR/MARXIST-LENINIST. THE
GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA DENIES THAT THE EXTREMISTS ARE

POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, BUT IT HAS BEEN EMBARRASSED BY THEIR SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO FOCUS NATIONAL ATTENTION ON THEIR ACTIONS. GOVERNMENT FORCES HAVE ACHIEVED PARTIAL SUCCESS AGAINST THE GUERRILLAS, RECOVERING SEVERAL ARMS CACHES AND CAPTURING SEVERAL BR LEADERS.

3. DESPITE LINKS TO URBAN FRONT GROUPS, EXTREMIST ACTIVITY IS CONCENTRATED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. THE ONLY MAJOR TERRORIST INCIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN TO OCCUR IN CARACAS IN SEVERAL YEARS WAS THE STILL UNSOLVED KIDNAPPING OF AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN, WILLIAM NIEHOUS, IN FEBRUARY, 1976, BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDOS, A PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN GROUP.

4. ALTHOUGH URBAN TERRORISM IS NOT A PROBLEM, URBAN VIOLENCE DOES EXIST IN CARACAS. IN ONE OF THE LOWER CLASS NEIGHBORHOODS MASKED TEENAGERS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC DISORDER IN DECEMBER, 1977. IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE OCCURRED IN SEVERAL VENEZUELAN CITIES, ONE OF WHICH RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF A STUDENT. IN CARACAS, IT WAS REPORTED THAT 84 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WERE INJURED AND 108 ARRESTED ON FEBRUARY 23, DURING DISTURBANCES. THESE ARE THE FIRST REPORTED DISTURBANCES TO OCCUR IN CARACAS FOR SOME TIME. THEY COME AT A TIME WHEN THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN CARACAS IS EXPECTED TO BECOME MORE INTENSE AS THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECEMBER PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION APPROACHES.

5. THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS LOU. A REVIEW OF ALL CLASSIFIED INFORMATION REVEALS NO INFORMATION THAT WOULD SPECIFICALLY AFFECT AUSTRALIAN INTERESTS IN CARACAS.

6. IF FURTHER INFORMATION IS REQUIRED, PLEASE CONTACT RSO CARACAS. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, SECURITY, PERSONNEL, DRUG CONTROL, THREATS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE052622
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SY/CC/TAG IJJOHNSTONE: BME
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780138-0704, D780111-0914, D780095-0012
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803118/aaaadwop.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cdf3db8a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SY
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3151216
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSESSMENT OF THREAT SITUATION IN CARACAS FOR AUSTRALIAN DFA SECURITY
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, VE, BANDERA ROJA, BR
To: CANBERRA HONG KONG MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cdf3db8a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014